

Application No.: 10/507,023
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Inventor: van der Heijden et al.
Docket No.: 903-117 PCT/US
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Amendments to the Claims:

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claims 1-16 (canceled).

Claim 17. (Previously Presented) A combination of a first container and a second container to form a dispensing unit, which first and second containers each have a reservoir for a liquid substance and a pump, which is secured to the reservoir, can be actuated by hand and has a dispensing opening and a pump-actuating button, for dispensing substance from the reservoir, which combination also comprises coupling means for coupling together the first and second containers in a position next to one another, the coupling means comprising one or more first coupling members which are each arranged on the first container, and one or more second coupling means, which are each arranged on the second container and which can each be directly coupled to an associated first coupling member on the first container, whereby each reservoir has an opening at the top side, in which the pump is secured by means of a securing collar, and in that a first coupling member and associated second coupling member are arranged on the securing collar of the first container and the second container, respectively.

Claim 18. (Previously Presented) A combination as claimed in claim 17, in which a further first coupling member and an associated further second coupling member are each arranged fixedly on the pump-actuating button of the associated container in order to create a stable coupling between the pump-actuating buttons of the two containers.

Claim 19. (Previously Presented) A combination as claimed in claim 17, in which associated first and second coupling members are designed to form an optionally releasable click-fit connection to one another.

Claim 20. (Previously Presented) A combination as claimed in claim 19, in which the click-fit connection is an optionally releasable sliding click-fit connection.

Claim 21. (Previously Presented) A Combination as claimed in claim 17, in which a pair of first and second coupling members is respectively arranged on the assembly of reservoir and pump of the first and second containers, respectively, in which the coupling members of each pair are complementary with respect to one another and in which the pairs of coupling members are identical to one another.

Claim 22. (Previously Presented) A combination as claimed in claim 17, in which the securing collars of the first and second containers are identical.

Claim 23. (Previously Presented) A combination as claimed in claim 17, in which the pump of each container has a dispensing passage which extends through the pump-actuating button.

Claim 24. (Previously Presented) A combination as claimed in claim 23, in which the pump-actuating buttons of the first and second containers each have a bearing surface for the other pump-actuating button, and in which the dispensing passage of each pump-actuating button has

a dispensing mouth in the vicinity of the bearing surface, so that in the coupled position the dispensing mouths lie adjacent to one another.

Claim 25. (Previously Presented) A combination as claimed in claim 17, in which the first and second coupling members are designed to form a coupling which can no longer be released by a user.

Claim 26. (Previously Presented) A combination as claimed in claim 18, in which the further first and second coupling members are designed to hold the first and second containers at an oblique angle with respect to one another, with the pump-actuating buttons together, and then to couple the containers first of all by means of the further coupling members associated with their pump-actuating buttons, and then to pivot the first and second containers towards one another about a hinge which is produced by the further coupling members of the pump-actuating buttons, in such a manner that the coupling members associated with the assembly of reservoir and pump of each of the containers are coupled to one another.

Claim 27. (Previously Presented) A dispensing unit comprising the combination of a first container and a second container coupled to it as claimed in claim 17.

Claim 28. (Previously Presented) A dispensing unit as claimed in claim 27, which also comprises reservoir holder which is designed to at least partially hold the reservoir of the first container and the reservoir of the second container.

Claim 29. (Previously Presented) A dispensing unit as claimed in claim 28, in which the separate reservoirs can be fixed in the reservoir holder by means of a click-fit connection between the reservoir holder and the respective containers.

Claim 30. (Previously Presented) A dispensing unit as claimed in claim 27, in which the dispensing passage in the first container at least partially merges with the dispensing passage in the second container, and in which the dispensing passages have a common dispensing mouth.

Claim 31. (Previously Presented) A dispensing unit as claimed in claim 27, in which there is a removable blocking element for blocking at least one of the pump-actuating buttons of the first or second container.

Claim 32. (Previously Presented) A dispensing unit as claimed in claim 31, in which a blocking element which can be removed, for example can be broken off, is formed integrally on each securing collar.

Claim 33. (Previously Presented) A dispensing unit as claimed in claim 31, in which the blocking element is a cylindrical clamping element which is substantially U-shaped in cross section and which, when the actuating button is in its highest position, can be clamped around a narrower section of the actuating button.

Claim 34. (Previously Presented) A container for a liquid substance which is clearly intended for a combination as claimed in claim 17.

Claim 35. (Previously Presented) A combination of a first container and a second container to form a dispensing unit, which first and second containers each have a reservoir for a liquid substance and a pump, which is secured to the reservoir, can be actuated by hand and has a dispensing opening and a pump-actuating button for dispensing substance from the reservoir, which combination also comprises coupling means for coupling together the first and second containers in a position next to one another, the coupling means comprising one or more first coupling members, which are each arranged on the first container, and one or more second coupling means, which are each arranged on the second container and which can each be directly coupled to an associated first coupling member on the first container, characterised in that a first coupling member and an associated second coupling member are each arranged fixedly on the pump-actuating button of the associated container in order to create a stable coupling between the pump-actuating buttons of the two containers and that the dispensing unit further comprises a reservoir holder which is designed to at least partially hold the reservoir of the first container and the reservoir of the second container.

Claim 36. (Previously Presented) A combination as claimed in claim 35, in which associated first and second coupling members are designed to form an optionally releasable click-fit connection to one another.

Claim 37. (Previously Presented) A combination as claimed in claim 36, in which the click-fit connection is an optionally releasable sliding click-fit connection.

Claim 38. (Previously Presented) A combination as claimed in claim 35, in which each reservoir has an opening at the top side, in which the pump is secured by means of a securing collar, and in which a further first coupling member and associated further second coupling member are arranged on the securing collar of the first container and the second container, respectively.

Claim 39. (Previously Presented) A combination as claimed in claim 35, in which a pair of first and second coupling members is respectively arranged on the assembly of reservoir and pump of the first and second containers, respectively, in which the coupling members of each pair are complementary with respect to one another and in which the pairs of coupling members are identical to one another.

Claim 40. (Currently Amended) A combination as claimed in claim 35, in which ~~the~~ securing collars of the first and second containers are identical.

Claim 41. (Previously Presented) A combination as claimed in claim 35, in which the pump of each container has a dispensing passage which extends through the pump-actuating button.

Claim 42. (Previously Presented) A combination as claimed in claim 35, in which the pump-actuating buttons of the first and second containers each have a bearing surface for the other pump-actuating button, and in which the dispensing passage of each pump-actuating button has

a dispensing mouth in the vicinity of the bearing surface, so that in the coupled position the dispensing mouths lie adjacent to one another.

Claim 43. (Previously Presented) A combination as claimed in claim 35, in which the first and second coupling members are designed to form a coupling which can no longer be released by a user.

Claim 44. (Previously Presented) A Combination as claimed in claim 35, in which the first and second coupling members are designed to hold the first and second containers at an oblique angle with respect to one another, with the pump-actuating buttons together, and then to couple the containers first of all by means of the coupling members associated with their pump-actuating buttons, and then to pivot the first and second containers towards one another about a hinge which is produced by the coupling members of the pump-actuating buttons, in such a manner that the coupling members associated with the assembly of reservoir and pump of each of the containers are coupled to one another.

Claim 45. (Previously Presented) A dispensing unit comprising the combination of a first container and a second container coupled to it as claimed in claim 35, also comprising a reservoir holder which is designed to at least partially hold the reservoir of the first container and the reservoir of the second container.

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Claim 46. (Previously Presented) A dispensing unit as claimed in claim 45, in which the separate reservoirs can be fixed in the reservoir holder by means of a click-fit connection between the reservoir holder and the respective containers.

Claim 47. (Previously Presented) A dispensing unit as claimed in claim 45, in which the dispensing passage in the first container at least partially merges with the dispensing passage in the second container, and in which the dispensing passages have a common dispensing mouth.

Claim 48. (Previously Presented) A dispensing unit as claimed in claim 45, in which there is a removable blocking element for blocking at least one of the pump-actuating buttons of the first or second container.

Claim 49. (Previously Presented) A dispensing unit as claimed in claim 48, in which a blocking element which can be removed, for example can be broken off, is formed integrally on each securing collar.

Claim 50. (Previously Presented) A dispensing unit as claimed in claim 48, in which the blocking element is a cylindrical clamping element which is substantially U-shaped in cross section and which, when the actuating button is in its highest position, can be clamped around a narrower section of the actuating button.

Claim 51. (Previously Presented) A container for a liquid substance which is clearly intended for a combination according to claim 35.